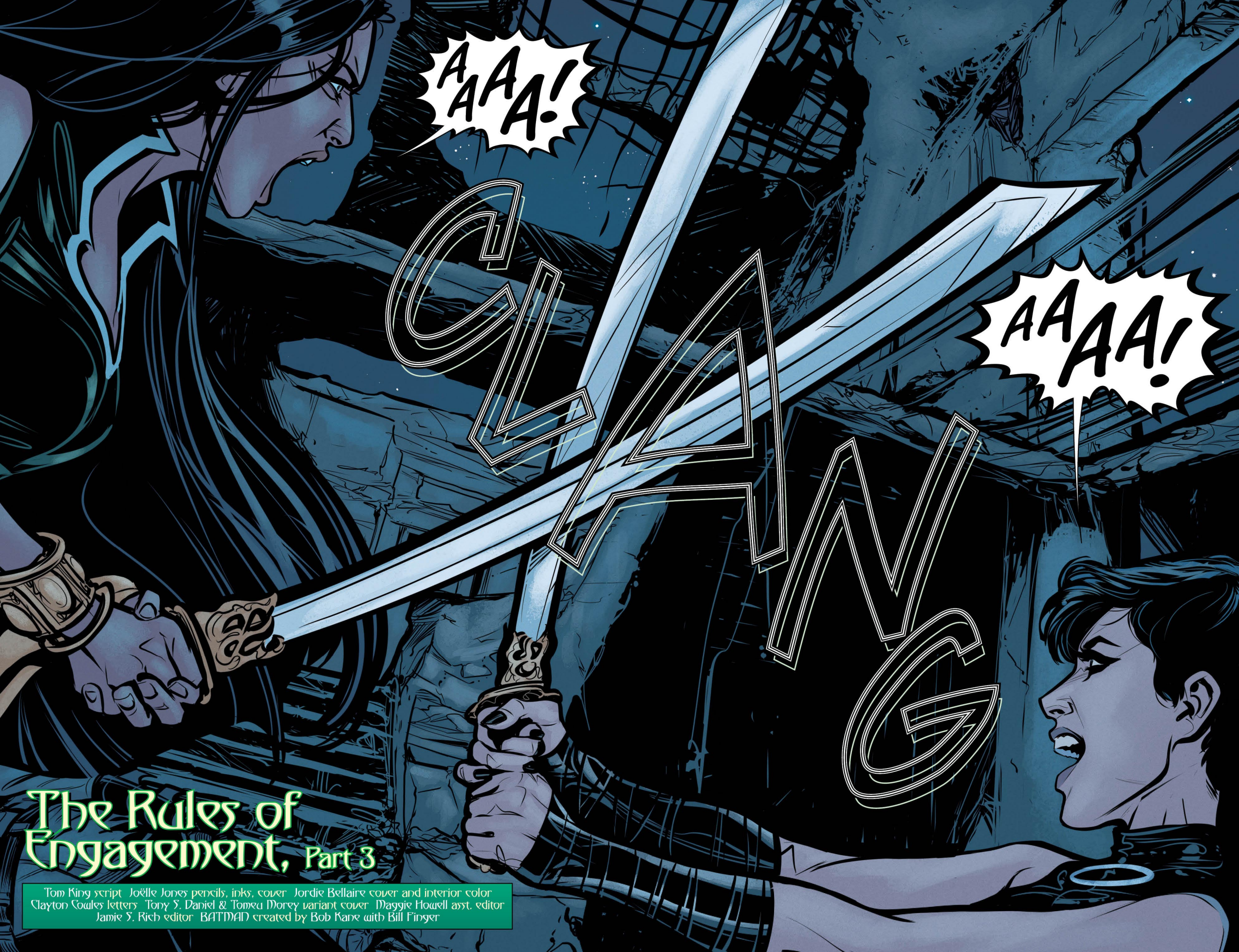




DC Comics presents...





AAA!

AAA!

CLANG

The Rules of Engagement, Part 3

Tom King script Joëlle Jones pencils, inks, cover Jordie Bellaire cover and interior color Clayton Cowles letters Tony S. Daniel & Tomeu Morey variant cover Maggie Howell asst. editor Jamie S. Rich editor BATMAN created by Bob Kane with Bill Finger



THE DAY I TOOK MY FIRST STEP, MY FATHER DID NOT SMILE.

HE DID NOT CONGRATULATE ME.

HE DID NOT TAKE A PICTURE AND TELL ME HOW PROUD HE WAS.

NO.

WHEN HE SAW ME WALK, MY FATHER GAVE ME A SWORD.



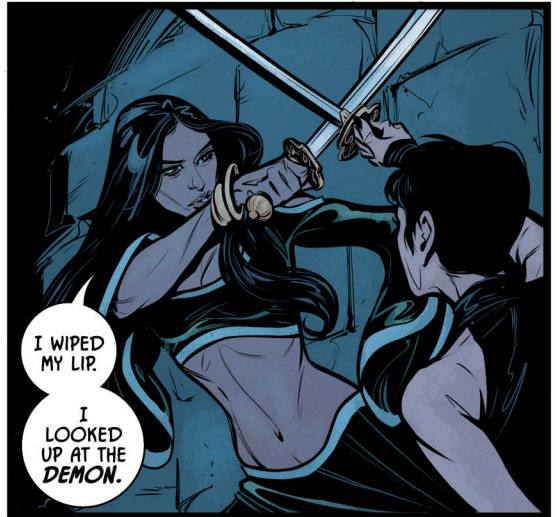
THEN HE SLAPPED ME WITH THE BACK OF HIS HAND.

AND I FELL TO THE GROUND.

IT IS MY FIRST MEMORY. THE SHOCK OF IT.

BLOOD IN MY MOUTH. ON MY TONGUE.

BITTER. WET.



I WIPED MY LIP.

I LOOKED UP AT THE DEMON.



"FIGHT," HE SAID.



"OR DIE."



AND SO I FOUGHT.

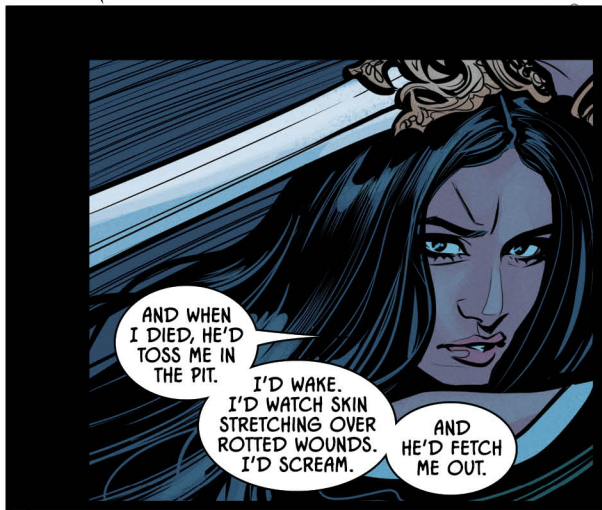
EVERY MINUTE.

EVERY DAY.



SOMETIMES I WON.

SOMETIMES I DIED.



AND WHEN I DIED, HE'D TOSS ME IN THE PIT.

I'D WAKE. I'D WATCH SKIN STRETCHING OVER ROTTED WOUNDS. I'D SCREAM.

AND HE'D FETCH ME OUT.



I WAS SO TIRED, AND HE'D MAKE ME WALK, AND HE'D SLAP ME AGAIN.

BITTER. WET.

THEN, AGAIN, THE SWORD IN MY HAND.



FIGHT, TALIA.

OR DIE, TALIA.



THAT IS HOW I LEARNED.

THAT IS HOW I KNOW THAT YOU--FOR COMING HERE WITH HIM--

YOU WILL DIE.